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CHAPTER 21
黒の探偵
くろのたんてい

6
日丘円
YEN HIOKA

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The extreme cruelty detective
presented by Yen Hioka

6

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Case.21 [The Earl]

黒の探偵

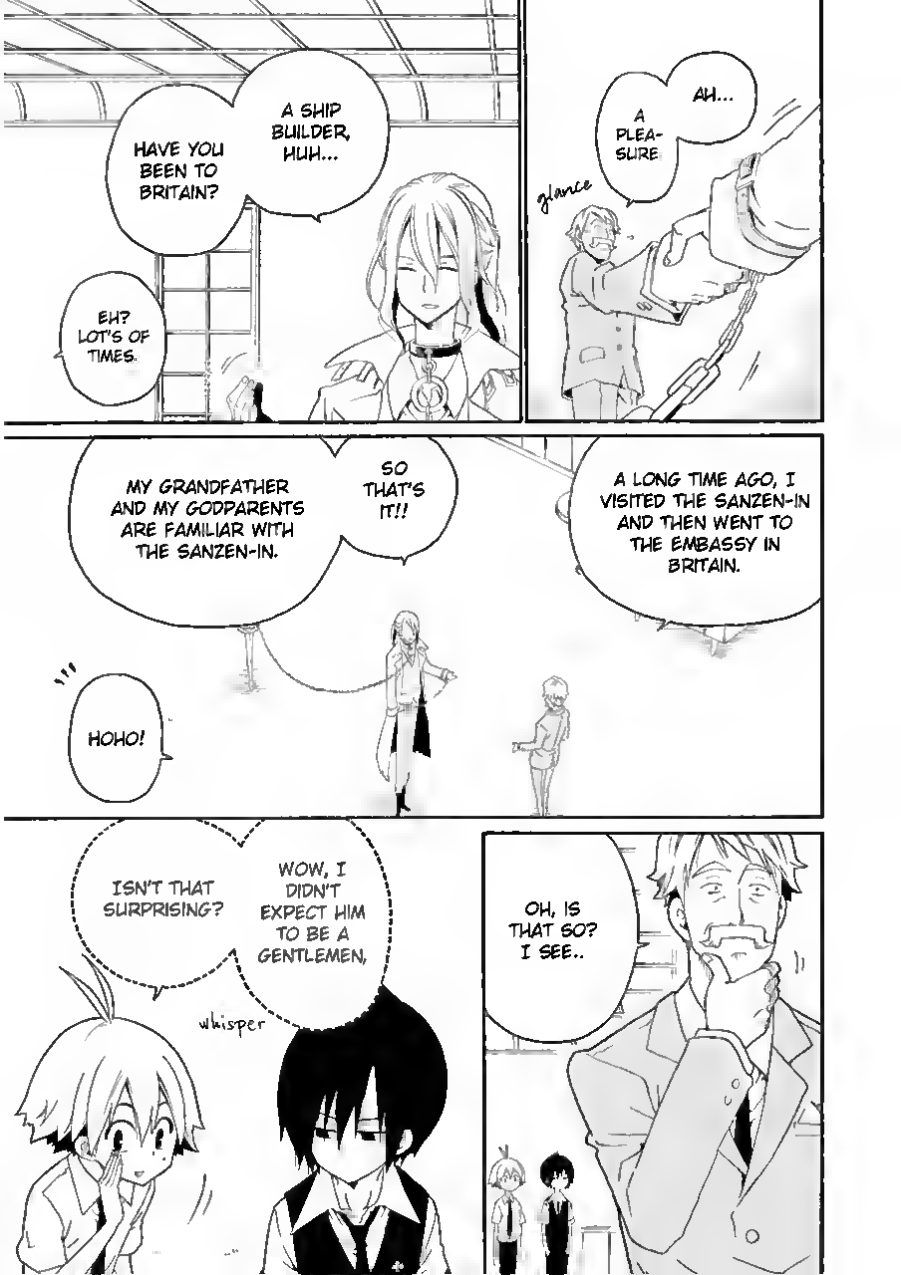
くろのたんてい

I DEEPLY APOLOGIZE FOR THE INCONVEN-IENCE,
EARL ASHFIELD.
PLEASE FORGIVE THEIR MANNERS.

...
AH
EARL?
...
...COULD IT BE THAT YOU WERE SLEEPING?
I'M NOT SLEEP-ING!

YOU WEREN'T SLEEPING, WERE YOU?
AH... EVEN THOUGH I COULD HAVE EATEN A LITTLE MORE...
HNG...
EVEN THOUGH YOU WERE TAKEN AWAY, WHY ARE YOU THANKING THEM!?
AH IT'S NOTHING
FOR CAREFULLY BRINGING ME ALL THE WAY HERE!
AH!! THANK YOU FOR YOUR HARD WORK!
!!
AH!!
STOP!! DON'T SAY THAT!!
NOT HAVING TO WALK IS GREAT!
WELL, IT WAS REALLY FUN!

EARL,
THIS IS THE MAN WHO'S REQUESTED YOUR INVESTIGATION, KAIDOU WATARUSHI.
Ahem
A PLEASURE TO MEET YOU,
rattle
I'm Asa L. Ashfield.


A SHIP BUILDER, HUH...
HAVE YOU BEEN TO BRITAIN?
EH? LOT'S OF TIMES.
glance
AH... A PLEA-SURE
A LONG TIME AGO, I VISITED THE SANZEN-IN AND THEN WENT TO THE EMBASSY IN BRITAIN.
SO THAT'S IT!!
MY GRANDFATHER AND MY GODPARENTS ARE FAMILIAR WITH THE SANZEN-IN.
HOHO!
OH, IS THAT SO? I SEE..
WOW, I DIDN'T EXPECT HIM TO BE A GENTLEMEN,
whisper
ISN'T THAT SURPRISING?

A GENTLEMEN, HUH...
TAP TAP
AH, THIS'LL BE THE PERSON YOU'LL BE INVESTIGATING WITH...
OH? AND WHO ARE THEY?
OH!

REACH
BEING ABLE TO MEET YOU IS AN HONOUR,
IT'S KUROBA YO.
EARL.
SAME HERE.
SMIRK

KUROBA.
NICE TO MEET YOU.
E-EARL!! THAT'S RUDE!!
HUH? IT IS? BUT WHEN I DO IT TO YOU, YOU ALWAYS GET HAPPY.
...
RUB
RUB

KU... KUROBA?
I-I DON'T GET HAPPY!!
Guh... Rui, please don't pull on the choker...!
FU...
HAHA, A GENTLEMEN, HUH...
THIS IS THE FIRST TIME I'VE BEEN GRANDLY INSULTED LIKE THIS.
IT SEEMS LIKE I DON'T NEED TO HOLD BACK IN WHATEVER I DO, HUH...
KUROBA IS CONSIDERING THE EARL AS HIS ENEMY!!
CRACK

AH, EXCUSE ME!
PLEASE, GO AHEAD.
N-NOW THEN, ABOUT THE CASE...
AHEM...
WELL EVERYONE, PLEASE BE ON STANDBY.
BUT ...
WELL... IF YOU COULD, I'D LIKE TO TALK TO YOU ALL IN PRIVATE WITH JUST US...
glance
WHAT? WHAT DO YOU MEAN BY THAT?
It's fine! I'll hold onto the Earl's chain very tightly!!
RATTLE

OR IS IT THAT...
HE'S COMMITTED AN ATROCIOUS CRIME? WHY ELSE WOULD HE WEAR THAT?
OH...
IS THAT HOW YOU SEE ME?
THERE ARE A LOT OF CRIMINALS THAT ARE ALSO GOOD-NATURED PEOPLE AS WELL.

...
THAT'S NOT SOMETHING TO BE HAPPY ABOUT, EARL.
I WAS PRAISED, RUI~
HEHEHE, "GOOD-NATURED",
IT SEEMS LIKE KUROBA IS BAD WITH THE EARL'S TYPE...
HE REALLY IS A BIT OUT OF HIS MIND, HUH, TOIRO...
HAS EVERYONE HEARD THE RECENT NEWS OF -:THE HAIR SNIPPER:-?
NOW THEN...
shut...

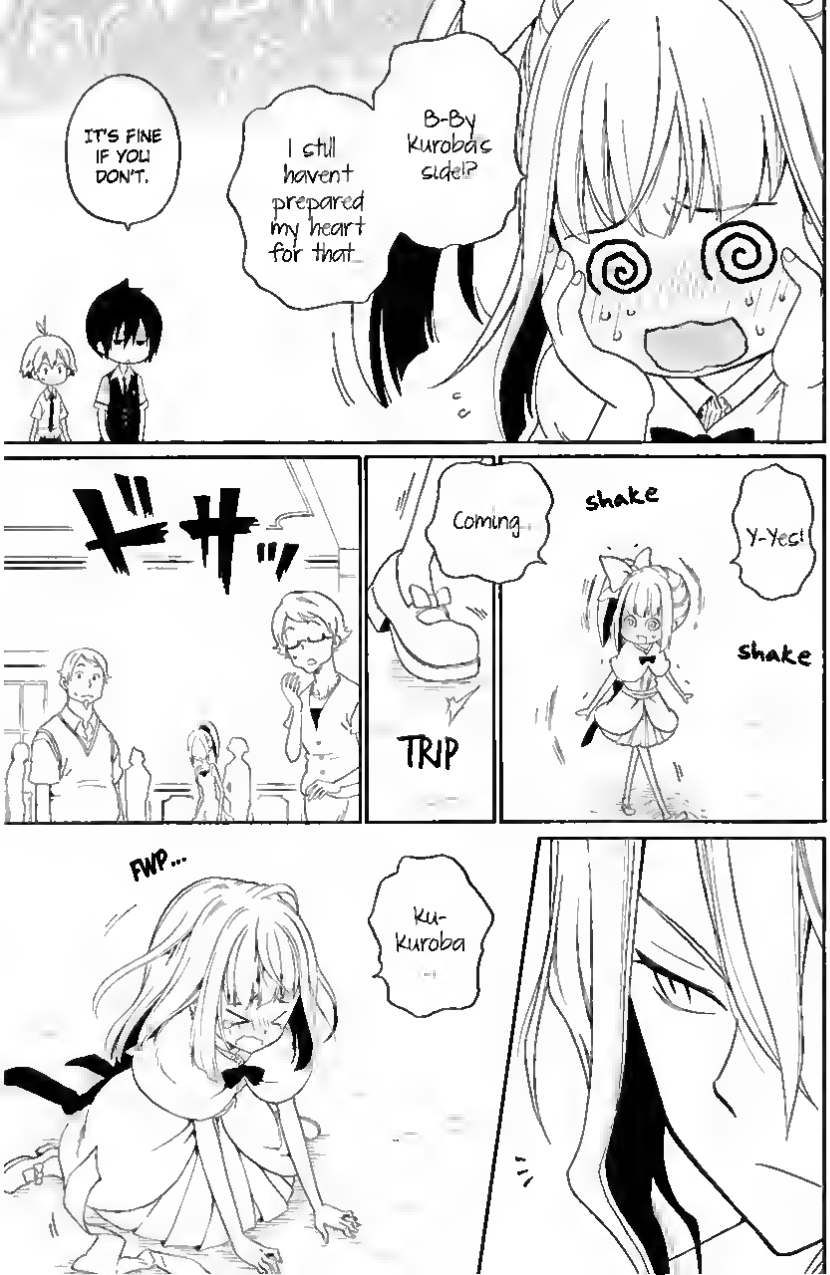
HMM.
THE CASE WHERE THE ATTACKER ONLY TARGETED WOMEN WITH LONG HAIR?
YES, THE ATTACKER COMES FROM BEHIND AND STEALS THEIR HAIR.
AND AS OF YESTERDAY, IT FINALLY DEVELOPED INTO A MURDER.
IT SEEMS THAT THE CULPRIT IS IN THIS MANSION.
!!
THE POLICE WHO HEARD THE SCREAM CHASED AFTER THE CULPRIT
WHO ENTERED THESE GROUNDS.

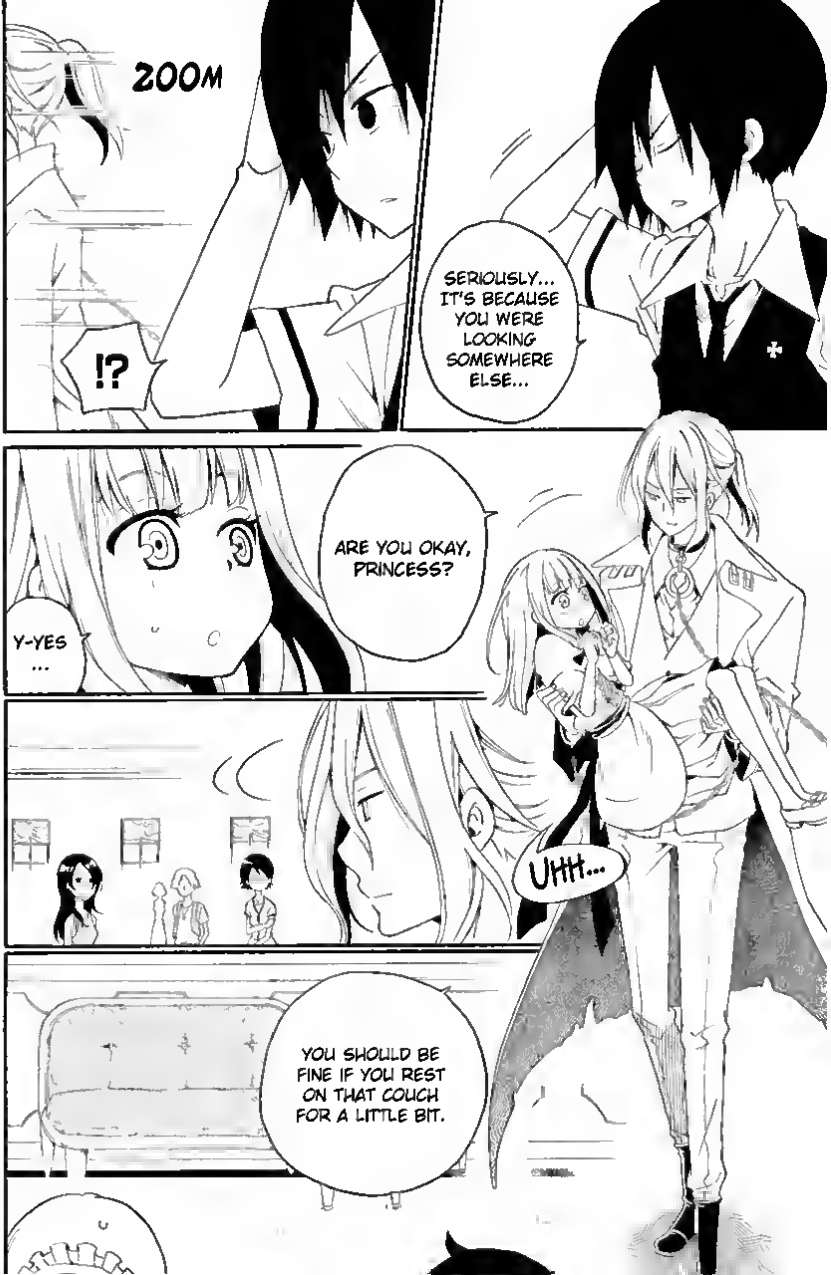
SIMPLY PUT, I HAVE NO IDEA WHO IT IS.
MAN OR WOMAN.
CURRENTLY, THE POLICE ARE GATHERING INFORMATION AND PREPARING TO GET A WARRANT.
AS I WAS TOLD BY A FRIEND WHO WORKED ON THE INSIDE.
IF THE CRIMINAL REALLY IS IN HERE, I WANT TO KNOW WHO IT IS.
AT LEAST, BEFORE THEY GET TAKEN AWAY.

NONE!?
NO, NONE.
shake
WELL, DO YOU HAVE ANY IDEA OF WHO IT MIGHT BE?
I SEE SO THAT'S WHY YOU REQUESTED A DETECTIVE.
I DON'T WANT TO HOLD ANY PREJUDICE.
I WOULD LIKE THE BOTH OF YOU TO MEET THEM ALL FAIRLY.
OPEN...
TAP
TAP
HOSAKA, IF YOU PLEASE.

Second Daughter
Nami (21)
Kaitoushi's Sister
Nazako (50)
Second Son
Masuto (30)
Oldest Son's Wife and Child
Misao (33) Saira(4)
Servant
Tsutsumi
(29)
WHAT'S GOING ON? IS IT A TALK ABOUT INHERITANCE?
WHY DID YOU GATHER EVERYONE HERE SO URGENTLY?
WHAT'S UP, DAD?
Eldest Son
Kaji (35)
Third Son
Ikari (28)
Maid
Fuu (18)
Kaitoushi's Niece
Kai (26)
Eldest Daughter
Mizuha (33)
Eldest Daughter's Fiance
Gen (37)
Kaitoushi's Wife
Ukiyo (54)

THIS IS EVERYONE THAT WAS IN THE MANSION ON THAT DAY.
THERE'S ONE!! THE SUSPICIOUS PERSON IS PLAINLY ALONE!!
TURN
TURN
IT SEEMS LIKE THERE'S SOMEONE OVER THERE AS WELL?
NENE!!
HUH?
!!!
12 PEOPLE, HUH... THIS IS GONNA TAKE SOME TIME.
NENE MIKANAGI, COME HERE.
!!!
HAH...
IT CAN'T BE HELPED... THAT'S ONE OF MY ASSISTANTS.


IT'S FINE IF YOU DON'T.
I still haven't prepared my heart for that...
B-By Kuroba's side!?
ドサッ
Coming
TRIP
shake
Y-Yes!
shake
FWP...
Ku-Kuroba...


ZOOM
!?
SERIOUSLY... IT'S BECAUSE YOU WERE LOOKING SOMEWHERE ELSE...
ARE YOU OKAY, PRINCESS?
Y-YES ...
UHH...
YOU SHOULD BE FINE IF YOU REST ON THAT COUCH FOR A LITTLE BIT.

...YES
IS THAT OKAY, RUI?
shake
shake
STRETCH
WHAT STORIES?
AND WHO ARE YOU?
NOW THEN,
PLEASE SHARE WITH US YOUR STORIES OF YESETERDAY'S EVENTS
Kya!
Me As Kuroba's princess!!

A detective,
I'VE BEEN REQUESTED TO INVESTIGATE THE CASE OF ~:THE HAIR-SNIPPER:~.
NO, YOU'RE THE SUSPICIOUS ONE HERE...
THERE ARE SUSPICIOUS PEOPLE HERE
YOU DON'T MEAN TO TELL ME THAT THE CULPRIT IS ONE OF US!?
EEH!?
DETEC-TIVE?
AN ATTACKER!?

I JUST WANT TO CONFIRM ONLY ONE THING.
THE LAST VICTIM WAS A WOMAN RETURNING HOME FROM WORK WHO WORE A BLUE ONE-PIECE AND WHITE HEELS.
SHE WORE GLASSES AND HELD A WHITE SHOULDER BAG.
HAVE ANY OF YOU SEEN THIS WOMAN AROUND THIS AREA?
HMM ...
EVEN IF YOU SAY THAT ...
I NEVER REALLY TRIED TO PAY THAT MUCH ATTENTION ...

MR KAIDOU,
I UNDER-STAND.
I KNOW WHO IS THE CULPRIT.
!!!?

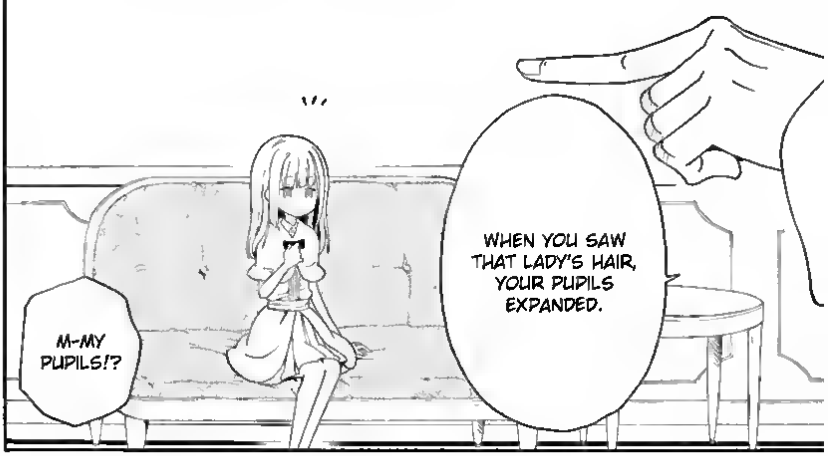
THAT'S BECAUSE THE CULPRIT IS HERE.
FROM SEEING THE PERSON, I KNEW THAT PERSON WAS SUSPICIOUS.
DIDN'T YOU JUST BEGIN THE INVESTIGATION!?
HUH!? ALREADY!?
D-DON'T LOOK!!
DON'T LOOK AT ME!!
TURN
gasp
gasp
PLEASE, WAIT A SECOND!
SO WHAT SHOULD I DO? SHOULD I ONLY TELL YOU, MR. KAIDOU?
HE PROBABLY JUST HAS A FEAR OF BEING LOOKED AT.
AH... IT'S NOT HIM,

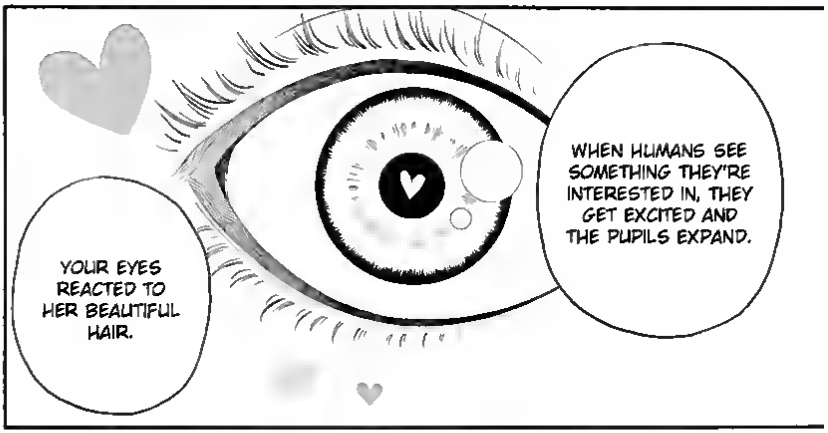
WHO ON EARTH IS IT? DO YOU HAVE EVIDENCE!?
YOU CAN'T TREAT SOMEONE LIKE A CRIMINAL WITHOUT A PROPER EXPLANATION!!
I'LL SAY THIS...
LOGICALLY SPEAKING, THIS PERSON IS THE MOST LIKELY TO BE THE CRIMINAL.
SEARCHING FOR EVIDENCE IS SOMETHING THE POLICE WILL DO.

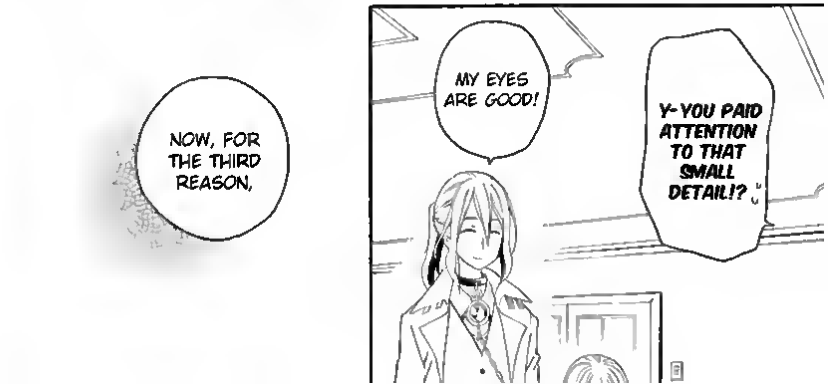
DO YOU UNDERSTAND, KUROBA? "THE PERSON MOST LIKELY TO BE THE CRIMINAL" ...
ARE YOU JOKING WITH US!?
YOU SAY "MOST LIKELY" ..
...NO.
TAP
TAP
WELL, DO YOU MIND IF I ASK FOR YOUR NAME?
WELL ...
IF THAT'S FINE WITH YOU?
JUST WHO IS IT AND WHY DO YOU THINK IT'S THAT PERSON?
WOULD YOU MIND EXPLAIN-ING?

GRAB
Madam...
HUH ...
M-ME!?
NO WAY!! IT'S KAI?
YOU'RE SAYING MY DAUGHTER IS THE CRIMINAL!?
NO WAY!! WHY IS IT ME...
IT WAS A DEDUCTION FROM THREE OF YOUR RESPONSES.

YOU'VE BEEN DOING IT SINCE YOU'VE ENTERED THIS ROOM.
FIRST, YOU'VE BEEN CROSSING YOUR ARMS.
HUH?
CROSSING ONE'S ARMS IS A WAY OF PSYCHOLOGICALLY PROTECTING YOURSELF.
YOU THOUGHT YOU COULD HOLD IN THAT STRONG UNEASINESS.
MY SECOND REASON,
HMM, I GAVE THAT SOME THOUGHT AS WELL.
I-IF THAT'S THE CASE, THEN WHAT ABOUT GEN!?


M-MY PUPILS!?
WHEN YOU SAW THAT LADY'S HAIR, YOUR PUPILS EXPANDED.


YOUR EYES REACTED TO HER BEAUTIFUL HAIR.
WHEN HUMANS SEE SOMETHING THEY'RE INTERESTED IN, THEY GET EXCITED AND THE PUPILS EXPAND.


NOW, FOR THE THIRD REASON,
MY EYES ARE GOOD!
Y-YOU PAID ATTENTION TO THAT SMALL DETAIL!?

WHEN I STARTED TO DESCRIBE THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE VICTIM, YOU LOOKED UP TO THE CORNER OF YOUR EYE.
ALMOST AS IF YOU WERE TRYING TO REMEMBER SOMETHING.
"WAS THAT WHAT THE WOMAN I ATTACKED LOOKED LIKE?"
YOU WERE THINKING OF SOMETHING ALONG THOSE LINES.
IF YOU WEREN'T THE CRIMINAL, YOU WOULD HAVE BEEN LOOKING AT ME
UNTIL I FINISHED DESCRIBING THE VICTIM.
T-that's...

THESE ARE ALL JUST FALSE ACCUSATIONS!!
THERE'S NO EVIDENCE BACKING YOUR CLAIM AND YOU DARE CALL ME A CRIMINAL!?
HMM? LOOKING FOR EVIDENCE IS NOT MY JOB.
THE POLICE CAN DO THAT.
WHERE HAVE YOU KEPT THE HAIRS YOU'VE COLLECTED?
...
THERE'S SOMETHING I HAVE YET TO DISCUSS...

IF YOU ARE A COLLECTOR, NO MATTER HOW MUCH THERE IS, I EXPECT YOU WOULD PUT THE THINGS YOU COLLECTED IN A BELOVED PLACE,
IF WE INCLUDE THAT INTO THE INVESTIGATION, IT WILL CERTAINLY BE FOUND.
BEFORE THAT HAPPENS, WOULDN'T TURNING YOURSELF IN, SAVE US ALL THE TROUBLE?
NOW THAT YOU MENTIONED IT... ISN'T KAI'S HOBBY MAKING JAPANESE DOLLS?
NO WAY... IT CAN'T BE...!!
THUD
Y-YOU'RE WRONG!!

I didn't mean to kill her
She was resisting so I put more force into it
I just wanted people's hair
Real hair filled with life
It was such pretty hair I couldn't help it
Kai
SO ISN'T IT OKAY IF I ONLY TAKE JUST A BIT!?
IT CAN GROW BACK OUT!!
RIGHT!? YOU CAN UNDERSTAND, RIGHT!?
YOU'RE RIGHT.
I UNDERSTAND THAT YOU DIDN'T INTEND TO COMMIT THE CRIME.

NEXT TIME, YOU SHOULD FIND A DIFFERENT METHOD TO COLLECT HAIR.
AL-RIGHT?
BUT FIRST, YOU MUST REPENT FOR WHAT YOU HAVE DONE.
SOB
UE..
UWA..
FEEL FREE TO TALK TO ME WHEN SOMETHING'S BOTHERING YOU, ALRIGHT?
GOOD GIRL.
YES..

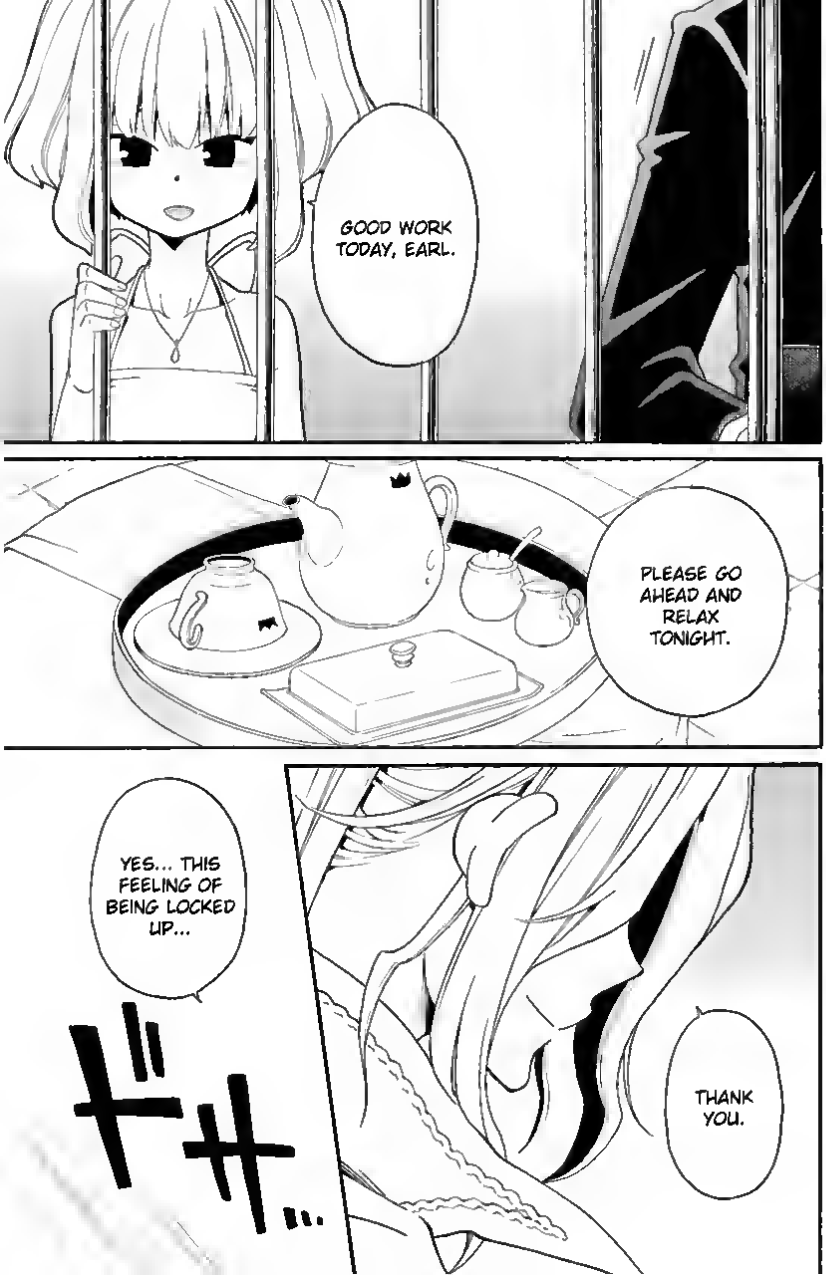
T-THE EARL'S AMAZING, HUH..
FURTHERMORE, HE'S SO KIND.
IT'S PROBABLY COMPLICATED.. HE DIDN'T GET HIS TURN AT ALL..
IT'S SUSPI-CIOUS!!
NOW THEN,
SHALL WE GO HOME, RUI?
KUROBA

DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT.
AH, WHAT ARE YOU SAYING? I WAS IN YOUR CARE...
YOU PROBABLY HAVE A LOT TO DEAL WITH
Hurry up, let's get going!!
Time to go home!!
NOW THEN, SIR, I APOLOGIZE FOR ANY INCONVENIENCE HE'S CAUSED.
I HOPE WE CAN MEET AGAIN SOMEWHERE.
IT'S A RELIEF WE FINISHED THIS WITHOUT ANY TROUBLE.
YOU TOO, KUROBA
IT'S OKAY, RUI. THIS FEELS UNEXPECTEDLY GOOD!
AH!! YOU'RE STILL SO INELEGANT!!
LOCK
LOCK
I'LL BE IN YOUR CARE AGAIN.

WELL THEN, IF YOU'LL EXCUSE US.
NO... I'M UNSURE IF HE SHOULD BE CALLED A DETECTIVE.
IT SEEMS LIKE THE RUMOURS OF THE EARL'S ABILITIES WERE TRUE.
WELL THEN, THE PROBLEM WAS SOLVED WITHOUT AN ISSUE.

HMM ...
WHAT KIND OF PERSON IS HE?
HE'S THE SON OF A FAMOUS EARL IN BRITAIN.
IT SEEMS THAT EVEN OVER THERE HE WORKED AS A DETECTIVE.
BUT, NOW...
I HEARD HE GOT ARRESTED FOR MURDER.
M-MUR-DER!?

I WONDER— IF IT'S TRUE.
THAT HE'S A SERIAL KILLER WITH
OVER ONE HUNDRED VICTIMS.


GOOD WORK TODAY, EARL.
PLEASE GO AHEAD AND RELAX TONIGHT.
THANK YOU.
YES... THIS FEELING OF BEING LOCKED UP...
ガチャ...

AS I THOUGHT, THE BEST WAY TO CALM DOWN IS BEING IN ONE'S ROOM!